

BALTIMORE SUN  
MAY 1968

# MISSILE DATA LACK DENIED BY PENTAGON

## Multi-Warhead Plans Aided By Launchings, Department Says

BY CHARLES W. CORDRY  
(Washington Bureau of The Sun)

Washington, May 6—The Defense Department said today that what it has learned from certain satellite launchings is similar to what it needs to know to develop the multiple nuclear warheads scheduled for the missiles of the 1970's.

In this manner, the department undertook to answer a claim published over the weekend by a Senate subcommittee that neither the technology nor a sound cost estimate is "in hand" for the weapons in question.

It said the "concept" of the MIRV, or multiple Independently Targeted Vehicle, has been subjected to "systems analysis" by several organizations in the department and that this analysis includes "extensive cost studies."

### "Successfully Proven"

"Technology similar to that required for the MIRV has been successfully proven in the placing of multiple satellites in precise orbit after launching with a single booster," the Pentagon said.

The significance of the MIRV is that Robert S. McNamara, former Secretary of Defense, elected this means of expanding the strategic nuclear force rather than increasing the numbers of intercontinental and submarine-launched missiles.

The force of Minuteman missiles will continue, under the McNamara plan, to total 1,000 but at least 400 of the earlier versions are to be replaced with the Minuteman-3 carrying multiple warheads. And 496 of the Navy's 659 sub-launched Polaris missiles are to be replaced with Poseidon missiles, likewise carrying multiple weapons.

### Not Yet Tested

It is apparent from today's Pentagon statement that the MIRV concept has not yet been tested in flight. The "similar" technology referred to in statement is that demonstrated in placing several communications satellites in orbit with one booster.

The booster, of course, was not a Minuteman-3 or Poseidon, nor were nuclear warheads and penetration aids—decoy materials to confuse enemy radar—involved.

Last January, officials disclosed that installation of the Minuteman-3 would be delayed ten or eleven months. The initial date has not been announced, but this appears to mean the weapon will not become operational until late 1969 or in 1970.

### Senate Paper

The claim about lack of technology and cost estimates for the multiple warheads on which the strategic forces are to become "increasingly dependent" was made in a paper published by the Senate subcommittee on National Security and International Operations.

Its author was Dr. James R. Schlesinger, director of strategic studies for the Rand Corporation. The point he sought to make was that the McNamara regime did not employ its own much-publicized "systems analysis" techniques in reaching conclusions on certain "preferred" weapons.

In the case of the MIRV, he contended, "the appropriate review of alternatives and hedges did not take place."